Use of Electronic Media to creat awareness about Pollution Menace

923. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the menace of pollution in metropolitan towns including the National Capital Delhi, has assumed alarming proportion;

(b) what specific steps are being taken to alleviate it;

(c) whether electronic and other media has been employed to create awareness about this menace; and

(d) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Pollution levels exhibit a rising trend in metropolitan towns. This is due to increase in economic activities including industries and transportation, accompanied by growth in population. However, a decreasing trend has been observed recently in case of National Capital Delhi due to various pollution control measures taken by the Government. The following steps have been initiated to control pollution in the metropolitan towns:—

(i) Effluent and emission standards have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to check pollution.

(ii) Industries have been directed to install necessary pollution control equipments in a time bound basis and legal action is taken against the defaulting units.

(iii) A scheme under the World Bank for setting up Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) in clusters of small scale industrial units had been taken up. 89 CETPs have been approved which are at various stages of development.

(iv) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipments and shifting of industries from congested areas.

(v) Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 1994 is in force

governing environmental appraisal of 29 specified categories of developmental projects.

(vi) Environmental Guidelines have been evolved for siting of industies.

(vii) Gross emission standards for on-road vehicles and mass emission standards for all categories of new vehicles have been notified under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 and are being enforced by the Department of Transport in various urban areas.

(viii) For control of pollution from vehicles, emission norms for both petrol and diesel driven vehicles at the manufacturing stage were introduced for the first time in 1990 and made tighter in 1996. More stringent emission norms will come into effect from 1.4.2000.

(ix) CNG is supplied for automobiles through a number of retail outlets in Delhi and Mumbai to cater to the CNG fitted vehicles.

(x) All the stone crushers have been closed down in Delhi.

(xi) All the Hot Mix Plants and brick kilns have been closed down in Delhi.

(xii) A number of hazardous and polluting industries have been closed down in Delhi.

(xiii) Action Plans for control of Pollution in Delhi and Mumbai are being implemented.

(xiv) 24 critically polluted areas have been identified. Action Plans have been drawn up for restoration of environmental quality in these areas.

(c) and (d) The Government is promoting environmental education

awareness and training in the area of pollution control through various programmes including use of electronic media which includes the following:—

(i) A number of documentaries and films have been sponsored by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for educating the general public for taking measures to protect the environment and control pollution. These documentaries/films are shown on Doordarshan and other channels.

(ii) The Ministry of Environment & Forests and Central Pollution Control Board have launched their own web sites for the dissemination of information on environmental related issues.

(iii) Video shows have been organized for the school children at various places in the country through Central Pollution Control Board.

Felling of trees

924. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Himachal Pradesh Government has lifted the 16 year old ban on the felling of trees; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Hon'ble Supreme Court vide para (iii) of its order dated 12th December, 1996 in Civil Writ Petition No. 202/95 has banned felling of trees in any forest, public or private, except in private plantations (non-forest) and the cutting of trees by right holders for their bona fide personal use. The news of lifting the ban on the felling of trees by the Government of Himachal Pradesh appeared in the Indian Express and the Hindu news papers on 23.1.2000. Ministry of Environment and Forests has advised the State